



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Health and Human Services
Department of Public Health
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality
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Memorandum

TO: Long-Term Care Facilities

FROM: Elizabeth Daake Kelley, MPH, MBA, Director
Bureau of Health Care Safety and Quality

SUBJECT: Personal Protective Equipment Requests, New Signage for COVID-19 Resident Rooms, and Reporting COVID-19 Deaths in Long-Term Care Facilities

DATE: April 6, 2020

The Department of Public Health (DPH) continues to work with state, federal and local partners on the outbreak of COVID-19, and we appreciate the critical role you play in this rapidly evolving situation. For the latest information, visit the DPH 2019 Novel Coronavirus website which is updated frequently: www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus.

The purpose of this communication is to:

- Remind long-term care facilities of the process in which to request Personal Protective Equipment (PPE);
- Share a new sign for facilities to use with information about special droplet/contact precautions;
- Clarify requirements to report to local board of health; and
- Remind long term care facilities of the process to report any deaths from presumed or confirmed COVID-19 that occur in your facility.

Process to Request Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

DPH recognizes that there is an urgent shortage of PPE, and we are working closely with our federal partners and suppliers to address this shortage. **If a shortage of PPE within your facility is identified, please follow these steps. It is essential that requests for PPE are directed through regional Health and Medical Coordinating Coalitions.**

The long-term care facility should:

1. Utilize resources across their organization (including established supply chain processes).
2. Check with mutual aid partners.
3. Contact the appropriate regional Health and Medical Coordinating Coalition (HMCC) for resource support.

To determine regional capabilities, please contact your regional HMCC:

Region	Website	24/7 Regional Duty Officer Phone	Duty Officer Email NOT monitored 24/7
Region 1	https://region1hmcc.org/	413-773-1502	hmcc@frcog.org
Region 2	https://archecoalition.org/	508-408-5173	N/A
Region 3	https://hmccreg3.org/	978-946-8130	dutyofficer@hmccreg3.org
Region 4AB	https://mrpcoalition.org/	857-239-0662	mrpcdutyofficer@challiance.org
Region 4C	https://bphc.org/Pages/default.aspx	617-343-6920	mic@bphc.org
Region 5	https://www.region5hmcc.com/	855-266-7243 ID# 32432	dutyofficer@region5hmcc.com

If a request cannot be fulfilled locally or within the region, the HMCC will advance the request to DPH. DPH will coordinate with our federal partners to try to address shortages as they arise.

Special Droplet/Contact Precautions

DPH encourages long-term care facilities to display the attached sign outside of rooms in which there are residents with respiratory viruses, including suspected or confirmed COVID-19. This sign provides critical infection prevention information to ensure health care workers take the necessary precautions before entering the room.

Reporting Any Deaths Related to COVID-19

Long-term care facilities should use the Health Care Facility Reporting System (HCFRS) to report any deaths that are presumed or confirmed to be related to COVID-19 that occur in the facility.

Local Board of Health Communication Process

Local boards of health (LBOHs) are important partners in addressing the COVID-19 emergency and have legal responsibility to respond to this infectious disease. LBOHs, under 105 CMR 300, are responsible for the management of the quarantine and isolation of any residents who may have been exposed to, are presumed or confirmed cases of COVID-19. Long-term care facilities should communicate any presumed or confirmed cases of COVID-19 to their LBOH.

LBOHs engage in contact tracing to identify any individuals who may have had prolonged, close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19. Long-term care facilities with a resident who is a confirmed case of COVID-19 may perform the facility-based contact tracing and identify any residents or health care personnel that meet the criteria for prolonged close contact. Long-term care facilities should communicate the findings from the facility-based contact tracing to the

LBOH. Long-term care facilities may follow DPH guidance for health care workers with an exposure to COVID-19 when making decisions about whether the individual may return to work. This guidance may be found here: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/guidance-for-health-care-personnel-with-potential-exposure-to-patients-with-covid-19/download>

Additionally, DPH encourages long-term care facilities to continue to collaborate with LBOHs.

This guidance and additional DPH and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) guidance for long term care facilities are posted online at <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/covid-19-guidance-and-directives>.

Please visit DPH's website that provides up-to-date information on COVID-19 in Massachusetts: <https://www.mass.gov/2019coronavirus>.